



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.2523 | FAX (517) 373.5669
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/johnson/

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Contact: Brian O'Connell
(517) 373-2523

Granholm Eliminates Key Funding for Special Needs Children *Senator Johnson Asserts Her Opposition*

LANSING – In a move opposed by Sen. Shirley Johnson (R-Troy), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Governor Granholm vetoed \$50,000 in the School Aid Budget for the Conductive Learning Center.

The Conductive Learning Center is an intensive, multi-disciplinary approach to education, training and development for youth with cerebral palsy, spina bifida and other motor challenges. The Conductive Education approach for enhancing the skills of motor-impaired individuals was established by Dr. Andras Peto in Hungary after World War II. It was established in Grand Rapids when a group of parents volunteered time and money to fund and operate the program which has now become a non-profit organization.

“I have visited the Conductive Learning Center and seen first hand the wonderful things they are doing,” said Johnson. “You only have to visit once to understand these kids are making amazing strides to eventually integrate themselves into our communities. In my years as a legislator, I have not seen a more worth while program.”

Conductive Education is an integrated program of educational and rehabilitative services focusing on the whole person, recognizing physical, social, intellectual, and emotional aspects of learning. They use small group settings, generally a ratio of three children to one teacher, where personal attention and group education motivates the child to complete tasks, encourages accomplishments, and supports confidence and effort.

(More)

“In other words, children are leaving their wheelchairs and learning to navigate on walkers,” said Johnson. “I know no other program of this kind exists in our state, and to my knowledge there are only a few in this entire country.”

“I am not done fighting for this center and these kids,” said Johnson. “I can make the promise that I will put funding in for this program whenever I can until the Governor comes on board and supports these kids.”

For more information on the Conductive Learning Center, contact Dr. David C. Dvorak, Ph.D. at (616) 459-8281 ext. 2429 or on the web at www.aquinas.edu.conded.